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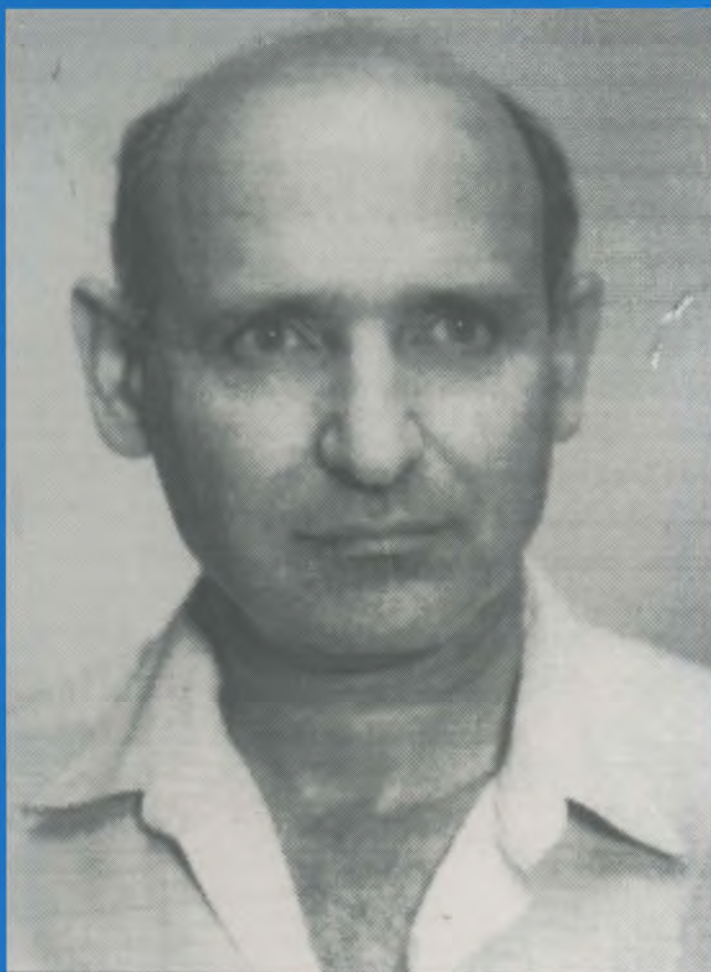
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**Ya'akov Meshorer 1935 - 2004**

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**EDWARD SCHUMAN, EDITOR**

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# **AMERICAN ISRAEL NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION**

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The Association publishes the SHEKEL six times a year. It has been referred to as a Jewish Reader's Digest. The SHEKEL is a journal and news magazine prepared for the enlightenment and education of the membership. You are invited to submit an article for publication.

## **Annual Membership fees:**

U.S., Canada and Mexico \$18. - Foreign \$25.- Life \$300.

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# President's Message

By Mel Wacks

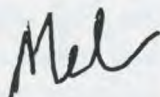
First, the good news. Many of our members have taken advantage of our offer to give a free Brilliant Uncirculated or Proof Israel commemorative coin to any member who brings in a new member. And the new member gets a free coin too! Some members have sponsored a few new members, and have received 3 or 4 free coins. So by sponsoring a new member for only \$18 you and he or she get coins that are probably worth more than \$18. What a deal! We have plenty more coins to give away (thanks to the generosity of Arnold Kagan) so what better way is there of giving gifts ... and getting gifts in return?

The bad news is that we have recently lost a good friend. Ya'akov Meshorer was the leading writer and researcher in the field of ancient Judaeon numismatics. Fortunately, we will always have Ya'akov by our side in the form of his books -- that should be part of every library. I will treasure more than ever Meshorer's "Jewish Coins of the Second Temple Period" (1967), "Ancient Jewish Coinage," Volumes 1 & 2 (1982), "Coins Reveal" (1983), "City Coins of Eretz-Israel and the Decapolis in the Roman Period" (1985), etc. But they will never replace this warm and friendly scholar.

Also, as I write this message, JJ Van Grover is in the hospital. JJ has been a member of the AINA Board of Directors for many years, as well as being a good friend to all AINA members and everyone interested in Israel coins. His advertising slogan has been "When you think of Israel coins, think of JJ" ... so I think now is a good time to think of JJ and wish him a speedy recovery.

And I also wish that any other AINA members who are having health problems get well quickly.

Happy Collecting!



# The Editor's Page

By Edward Schuman

This message is being written a few weeks before Florence and I leave for the American Numismatic Association's annual convention in Pittsburgh. For the first time we will staff an A.I.N.A. table in the club section of the bourse floor where we will distribute SHEKEL magazines and hopefully gain some additional members for our organization. We welcome anyone who will be at the convention to stop by and chat awhile.

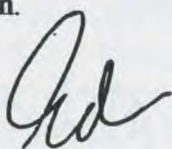
We still have a quantity of donated Israel commemorative coins which will be used to promote membership. New members will be credited with full 2005 membership while receiving the remaining SHEKEL issues of 2004. Thanks to our membership promotions and our dealer advertisements we have closed out the year in the black. Our organization is in good shape and is financially sound.

We had several responses to Sam Halperin's Mystery of 1948 Thomas De La Rue Anglo Palestine Bank note which was printed in the last issue of the SHEKEL. You will recall that Sam asked the readers to write to the editor and tell him what you thought on the subject. Most believed that the de la Rue note pictured was part of a trial series of designs by this banknote printer for the proposed new issues. However the British were certainly irritated over giving up their mandate for Palestine and most probability exerted pressure which prevented the de la Rue Company from supplying the notes. Instead the American Banknote Company secured the order using gillouches recycled from previously issued notes for China.

The editor particularly recommends reading "Jewish History in a Capsule", the article written by Senator John McCain's brother, Joseph McCain. And Shmuel Aviezer deserves our appreciation for a most well written article on the history of Israel's Hanukka issues. Am Yisrael Chai. The people of Israel live on.

Till the next issue

Ed



## **YA'AKOV MESHORER (1935-2004)**

Professor Ya'akov Meshorer, the pre-eminent scholar of ancient Jewish numismatics and a good friend to many members of the American Israel Numismatic Association (AINA), has passed away at age 69 after a long and painful illness. Prof. Meshorer was no stranger to the pages of *The SHEKEL* to which he was among the earliest contributors though, of course, the major portion of his rich legacy of more than twelve books and one hundred articles and reviews on Jewish coins and tokens appeared for the most part in Israel, his beloved native land. In addition to his well deserved reputation as a scholar, curator, lecturer and mentor in the Israeli setting, however, Ya'akov Meshorer's irrepressible enthusiasm for his subject and it's broad historical meaning made him a uniquely accessible ambassador, indeed a missionary, to those amateur collectors, in America and elsewhere, who had previously found ancient Jewish coinage an intriguing but somewhat esoteric subject. It is fair to say that the broad interest manifest today in this field owes much to his efforts both as a premier scholar and as a popularizer.

Ya'akov or Yankele as he was familiarly known to his friends from childhood on, was born one of a pair of identical twins, in Palestine under the British Mandate in 1935 in Kerem Avraham, not far from the Tombs of the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem. His father, Avraham Nissan, was an immigrant from the Ukraine about 1925 who changed his name from Singerman to Meshorer. His mother, fortuitously named Zmira, was a Sephardi woman who was not only born in Palestine but was a member of the illustrious Mani family, believed to be of Davidic descent, and eminent as Chief rabbis in Hebron for several generations, having immigrated from Iraq in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

Ya'akov already as a boy developed the habit of wandering among ancient ruins and dusty paths where, he frequently recounted in later years, it was possible for the alert seeker to find ancient coins underfoot. As a youth he profited from the friendly instruction and encouragement of distinguished numismatist authorities of the preceding generation such as Mordechai Narkiss, long time director of the Bezalel Museum ( the collections of which later became the basis of the Israel Museum).

Meshorer, who was Bar Mitzvah in the year of Israel's independence, joined the Israel Defense Forces as a member of a Nahal group in 1954. Later he came to use his Arabic skills and familiarity with the terrain when placed in charge of the archeological sites of the West Bank after the Six Day War, in which he had been wounded. After living for some years as a member of Kibbutz Hatzetim, near Beersheba. He returned to Jerusalem

and studied at the Hebrew University through the 1960s, receiving a BA degree in Archaeology and Jewish History, an MA in Classical Archaeology and a PhD in Numismatics (the former degree with the collaboration of the British Museum). Soon thereafter he established the Numismatic department of the Israel Museum which he headed from 1969-1993. Overlapping this responsibility were tenures as the Museum's Chief Curator Of Archaeology, 1975-1982 and 1990-1996.

Concomitantly he was Lecturer and, from 1983-2000, Professor of Numismatics at The Hebrew University in Jerusalem. As an academic scholar he utilized several sabbatical periods to pursue his research abroad, among them spending about a year each at the American Numismatic Society (ANS) and Jewish Theological Seminary in New York (1974), at Duke University (1979), at the British Museum, London, and at the Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris, (1997).

Among many other honors he was a recipient of the prestigious Archer M. Huntington Medal of the ANS, and of the Yad Yitzhak Ben Zvi Award of the Institute of Research of Eretz Israel. Professor Ya'akov Meshorer's scholarly contributions to his primary field of ancient Jewish coinage cannot be comprehensively treated here but several of the general categories about which he published important work may be mentioned. Firstly he pursued an interest in many of the local coinages of the Holy Land in antiquity, identifying, gathering, cataloguing and interpreting (or re-interpreting) such previously ill-defined coinage groups as the Nabatean and Samaritan coinages, coins of the Decapolis and Aelia Capitolina, and the Yehud coinage of Philisto-Arabia.

He was also concerned with the economic, political and religious significance of many coinages, both at their initial production and in their circulation thereafter. Above all, he was willing indeed eager to engage the long standing controversies surrounding the localization and sequence of Jewish coins issued under Persian, Greek and Roman hegemonies as well as those ascribed to the brief periods of Jewish quasi independence. He published **Jewish Coinage** (1967) and the two volume work **Ancient Jewish Coinage** (1982), both becoming standard works in the field, as well as editing several volumes covering similar broad categories in the *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum* series of the ANS. He was, of course, also the senior Israeli expert to whom historians, lecturers, archaeologists, and numismatists, both professional and amateur, turned for identification of specimens, and consultative advice. Professor Meshorer's interests and knowledge, however, were not restricted to antiquity; he was also an expert on Jewish tokens, "False Shekels" and other Hebrew language fantasy coins of the Renaissance, and Jewish paper money about which he

prepared learned articles or catalogs. On all of the above mentioned topics, from antiquity to modernity, he was also an invariably enthusiastic, witty and highly engaging lecturer. In the final year of his life he brought to completion several manuscripts yet to be published, one of which, entitled **The Third Side of the Coin**, undertakes to treat various often overlooked byways of Jewish numismatics, as well as a series of related biographical notes.

Beyond such traditional scholarly work, Ya'akov also maintained a non-ivory-tower existence, recognizing the need to get his hands dirty, mainly literally, but perhaps occasionally figuratively as well. In order to build up the Israel Museum collection under his care he made frequent forays into "the field". Naturally this frequently brought him to the sites of formal archaeological digs, and also to reputable coin dealerships at home and abroad. However, it also necessarily propelled him to that "gray market" which in Israel is a major source of important coins and artifacts even if these do not always originate from fully authorized excavations. His skill in dealing with this demi-monde of Israeli and Palestinian traders was legendary and he was said to be able to balance honorably the Museum's interest in acquiring important specimens against the uncertain legality of some of the merchandise placed before him. Another type of field that required his diligent husbandry was visiting the homes of wealthy and not so wealthy collectors, in Israel and abroad, who might perhaps donate rare coins or other treasure to the growing Museum collection, or even simply make its curator aware of varieties previously unknown to him. Yet another venues he frequented over many years were those domains of the coin lover, the coin club and the convention, where Ya'akov, who had himself started out as an amateur, understood that he had an obligation to educate collectors as well as an opportunity to cultivate future scholars and donors.

Perhaps here the present author may be permitted an aside for, even as a person who has never seriously collected ancient coins, I was fortunate to count Ya'akov as a personal friend for some thirty years and thus to observe his character as a man without being burdened by the awe of his specialized knowledge which those who shared his focus on antiquity may have experienced. During 1974, when he spent a year in New York at the ANS, of which I was a member, we met there frequently; it also turned out that we lived in the same neighborhood in Riverdale.. This gained me the privilege of meeting socially with him, his wife, Adaya and his three children, Hagit, Nitzan and Yishai. Ya'akov may have been a polymath and widely involved in the world both academically and personally, but this engagement was never at the expense of his devotion to the members of his

family from whom he never allowed himself to be long separated. That I was a neighbor during his New York sabbatical year also allowed me to be of some use in driving him on several expeditions to visit actual or potential Israel Museum donors in nearby suburbs. During these trips I watched how a man both sincere and focused upon his task, who gave freely and modestly of his time and effort, might stand on equal ground with persons of great wealth and influence, and could persuade people to be more generous than perhaps they themselves realized they were prepared to be. I also saw that Ya'akov, though a great numismatic expert, did not hesitate to engage with *hoi polloi*, including me, a relative novice, not only in extensive conversation but in collaboration. For, based on our free ranging numismatic discussions he later invited me to join him as co-author of a handbook for the then permanent exhibition of coins and medals at the Jewish Museum of New York. He, of course, described and discussed the coins while I, encouraged in this way for the first time, wrote up the medal and token section. It was during this same sabbatical visit thirty years ago that Ya'akov undertook systematically to read through the entire Talmud, Bavli and Yerushalmi, noting down all allusions to coins or money and other pertinent historical references. In subsequent years during many visits, by him to America, by me to Israel, I time and again had the good luck to witness his unfailing optimism, good cheer, and the ready assistance proffered to others even when for many years before his death he was compelled to live and continue his work burdened by a mortal and painful illness. He drew much comfort from the warmth of his family life and the loyalty of friends and colleagues throughout his life; no doubt all who knew him understood too that they were fortunate in having the opportunity to engage with this wonderful human being.

There will no doubt be many to better document, appreciate and comment on the specifics of Ya'akov Meshorer's scientific contributions to Numismatics, but from my viewpoint as an amateur collector, a member of AINA, and a friend, it is his greatness of heart which is most immediately memorable and which I believe should and will remain an important part of his public and private legacy. Of Professor Ya'akov Meshorer, we may truly say, in the traditional invocation of great persons who have passed on: \_\_\_\_\_, His memory is a blessing. **Ira Rezak MD**

Please note that among the sources consulted in the preparation of this notice I owe special thanks to Haim Gitler, Professor Meshorer's successor as Curator of Coins at the Israel Museum, and to David Hendin, a professional numismatist specializing in ancient Jewish coinage and a frequent contributor to The SHEKEL. Both were close friends of Dr. Meshorer and graciously permitted access to the obituary notices they had independently prepared.

# JEWISH HISTORY IN ALASKA

In 1728, the Danish explore Vitus Bering captained a Russian expedition to Alaska that eventually led to a permanent Russian presence in that corner of North America. The lure was furs, and Jewish fur trappers accompanied Bering and later figured in the Russian-American Company. One company manager (1850-53) was Nikolai Y. Rosenberg. In 1867, Russia sold Alaska to America for \$7.2 million, or less than 2 cents per acre. Seward's very purchase of Alaska was the result of strenuous U.S. lobbying and Czarist negotiations sponsored by Louis Gerstle and Louis Sloss, Jewish merchants of San Francisco who had established trading relations with Russian Alaska. It was considered folly to many Americans then ... still unknown to all parties was Alaska's monumental mineral wealth - gold, silver, copper, zinc, coal, and oil.

The Gerstle River in North East Alaska is named after Lewis Gerstle, who with Lewis Sloss purchased the Russian Trading Company and renamed it the Alaska Commercial Company, becoming a major provider of groceries and general merchandise for trappers, explorers and gold seekers, steamboat transportation, and financing of Alaskan mining ventures. These village stores became the center of community activities, serving as post office, community hall, courtroom, marriage parlor, funeral home, and safe haven for travelers, as well as the bank extending credit to trappers, miners, and fishermen. Later the Northern Commercial Company was formed to take over the assets of the Alaska Commercial Company.



This firm issued several tokens for use in their operations. Among the steamboat transportation tokens were ones named the Martha Clow and the Tanana. There is also a ship token from the Str. Sarah, named for Mrs. Sarah Sloss, wife of Louis Sloss with one side bearing the flag with the initials N.N. Co. for Northern Navagation Company. These tokens were probably used as meal checks.

The Northern Commercial Company also issued merchandise checks, good for so many dollars in trade at their stores. These are known in denominations from 25 cents to \$10.00 and were made of aluminum.



In 1885, the first permanent Jewish settlers in Juneau were members who established a fur trading post and dealt in sable, beaver, marten, and mink. Dawson City was site of the first Jewish services in Alaska in 1898, when about 40 people gathered to pray. In 1901, the Jews of Nome formed the first Jewish organization in Alaska, the Nome Hebrew Benevolent Society, the organization's members working primarily in shipping and retailing. Jews have had a presence in Juneau since the late 1800s. They came as peddlers and merchants, traveling far to new and growing communities to seek their fortunes and build a new life for themselves and their families.

News of the Yukon gold rush became known when one of Gerstle's steamboats docked at San Francisco carrying 750,000 dollars in gold. Of the 20,000 gold-seekers who came to the Yukon in 1898, nearly 200 Jewish descendants lived in Dawson City. They informally and sporadically sought each other out to celebrate Jewish high holidays. In the fall of 1898, as the Jewish New Year approached, about 36 men met at Charles Rosener's store to celebrate the first evening's Rosh Hashanah services. As the word spread, the congregation was forced to rent the larger Yukon Order of Pioneers hall to accommodate newcomers. It was the first time a Jewish holiday was celebrated in the Yukon and it led to the formation of the Hebrew Congregation of Dawson.

In response to the Jewish refugee crisis in the 1930s as a result of the Nazi occupation of Germany and Austria, a handful of Washington officials, including Harold Ickes, Minister of the Interior under President Franklin Roosevelt, attempted to find a way around America's strict immigration quotas in order to allow a certain number of refugees to settle in sparsely-populated Alaska, then only a territory. The first such proposal by U.S. Rep. Charles Buckley, D-NY, had come days after news of

Kristallnacht stunned the world. Roosevelt quickly turned him down, fearful of the politics of bringing Jewish refugees into Alaska. Ickes, one of Roosevelt's closest advisors, received worldwide publicity when he announced he wanted to do something to help. But his suggestion met strong opposition from both Jews and non-Jews. Americans resented what they saw as competition for jobs from foreigners during the Great Depression. Hatred toward Jews was high and alarms about "international Jewish conspiracies" were heard openly across America from right-wing politicians and radio personalities.

The prevailing view in Alaska was strongly opposed to Jewish immigration for a variety of reasons, most of a provincial nature frightened by the thought of foreigners arriving in large numbers. While America debated the issue, the leader of the Jewish community in the town of Neustadt in central Germany wrote Washington in 1939 to make an urgent application for immigration to Alaska. One day after his letter arrived at the Department of the Interior, Germany invaded Poland and World War II began. In March 1940, Roosevelt answered the letter, indicating that permission to immigrate to Alaska was still being considered. While Congress debated the worth of allowing Germans to enter Alaska in May 1940, the German army invaded France. The Alaska bill drew strong opposition from anti-immigration lobbies and Alaska's territorial legislature. The bill died in subcommittee, and the Jews of Neustadt succumbed to the Nazi Final Solution. The letters from Neustadt remain as part of a collection of documents in the National Archives about the Alaska immigration plan, one of the darker moments of Jewish history in America.

The Jewish military chaplains who arrived in 1941 during World War II were the first rabbis to officiate in Alaska. The permanent civilian Jewish community grew out of The Fairbanks and Anchorage Armed Services Committee when discharged servicemen, as well as homesteaders and government personnel, began coming in substantial numbers. When Alaska became the 49th American state, Ernest Gruening, a former territorial governor, was elected one of its first two United States senators. In 1964, Jay A. Rabinowitz was named to The Alaska Supreme Court.

Jews in the military still outnumbered civilian Jews in 1960, but the military numbers dwindled with the suspension of the draft in the early 1970's. The Jewish community began to change as a civilian and more permanent population grew. Today, Anchorage is the main focus of Jewish Alaska.

# The Hejaz Railway Medal

The Hejaz Railway Medal is listed in Haffner's Judaic Tokens and Medals Book and has occasionally appeared amongst items sold in Judaic numismatic auctions. This 30 mm silver medal was given to distinguished workers for laying the railway line which was planned to run from Damascus to Haifa, to Medina and on to Mecca. The obverse of the medal pictures a steam locomotive of the type used on the line. The reverse has Turkish inscriptions. The medal is circa 1900.



The Hejaz Railway was originally built to transport pilgrims to Medina, where they would travel on to Mecca for the Muslim Pilgrimage. The idea was first put forward in 1864 during the height of the age of great railways around the world, but it was not until 40 years later in 1908 that the Hejaz Railway came into being. Before the Hejaz Railway, Muslim pilgrims traveled to Medina by camel caravan.

The journey between Damascus and Medina usually took two months and was full of hardships. Since the Muslim calendar is a lunar calendar, the feast of Al Adha, when Muslims travel to Medina to worship the black stone changed from season to season. Sometimes it meant traveling through the winter, enduring freezing temperatures or torrential rains. At the height of summer, it meant crossing scorching hot deserts. Towns and settlements were sparse and there were hostile Muslim tribes along the way, as well as the inevitable hucksters who preyed on pious pilgrims, as they made the 'once in a lifetime' pilgrimage, in obedience to their prophet Mohammed.

The building of the Hejaz Railway presented a financial and engineering challenge. It required a budget of some \$16 million dollars, and this was at the turn of the century when dollars were worth a lot more than they are today. Contributions came from the Turkish Sultan Abdul Hammed, the Khedive of Egypt, and the Shah of Iran. Other contributions came from the Turkish Civil Service, Armed Forces, and other various fund-raising efforts which included the sale of titles such as Pasha or Bey to citizens who could afford the price of instant honor.

Construction, maintenance and guarding of the line all presented enormous difficulties. The task was mainly undertaken by 5,000 Turkish soldiers. Along the way there were hostile tribesmen, who before the railway, made a lucrative profit guiding, protecting and providing for pilgrims. They were very unhappy at losing part of their livelihood. Along with this there were physical difficulties. Driving a railway across the Arabian deserts proved very difficult. The ground was very soft and sandy in places and solid rock in others. There were also major geographical obstacles to cross. While drinking water, and water for the steam engines was a problem, winter rainstorms caused flash floods, washing away bridges and banks and causing the line to collapse in places.

The camel caravan owners were far from pleased by the construction of the railway line, as it posed a considerable threat to their livelihood. The railway journey was quicker and cheaper, and no-one in his right mind would contemplate spending £40 on an arduous, two-month camel journey when he could travel in comfort in only four days for just £3.50. Frequent attacks on the trains by the tribes and furious caravan operators, made the journey to Medina a perilous undertaking for pilgrims, whether by camel or by rail. The pilgrim's honor was also at stake. It wasn't long before pilgrims who took the long and difficult camel route started calling the rail route the "women's route." It was ok for women and the sick to travel by rail, but real men, undertaking a real pilgrimage still traveled by camel caravan, just as the prophet Mohammed would have done.

On 1 September 1908 the railway officially opened, and by the year 1912 it was transporting 30,000 pilgrims a year. As word spread that the pilgrimage had just become easier, business boomed, and by 1914 the annual load had soared to 300,000 passengers. Not only were pilgrims transported to Medina, but the Turkish army began to use the railway as its chief mode of transport for troops and supplies. This was to be the railway's undoing, as it was severely damaged during the First World War by Lawrence of Arabia and the Arab Revolt. The old Arab tribes that guided and guarded pilgrims now had the opportunity to turn their vengeance on the railway. While many claim that it was not their intention to destroy the railway, but rather attack the supply lines of the retreating Turkish army, the railway was destroyed anyway.

After the First World War, and until as recently as 1971, several attempts were made to revive the railway, but the scheme proved too difficult and too expensive. Road transport was soon established and, by the 1970's aviation had made rapid progress. The railway was soon abandoned and the huge old steam locomotives sat and rusted. But the romance of the railway remains alive.

## Jewish Paper Money in Russia - Bolekhov

The city of Bolekhov lies at the foot of the Carpathy mountains on the River Sukel. Known since the 14th century, Bolekhov has belonged to the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, Poland and since 1939 to the Ukraine.

Municipal status was granted to Bolekhov in 1612 by the lord of the town, and the Jews living there were accorded the right to participate in municipal elections for the mayor and council. In 1780 the Austrian government founded a Jewish agricultural settlement near Bolekhov named New Babylon. Jewish occupations in Bolekhov in the 18th century included trade in Hungarian wines, cattle, horses, and salt from the local mines. Industrial undertakings established by Jews included timber and other mills, tanneries, and furniture, soap, and candle factories. The oil industry founded in Bolekhov after World War I, and its position as a summer resort, also provided sources of Jewish incomes.

Bolekhov was a cradle of the Jewish Enlightenment movement (Haskalah) in eastern Galicia. Jews there were taking an interest in Polish and other foreign languages even in the 18th century. Jews then formed a considerable majority of the population until World War II. In 1900 there were 3,323 Jewish inhabitants approximately 78% of the total population. In elections for the Austrian parliament from 1867 through 1906, Bolekhov formed part of a constituency with largely Jewish voters.

Jewish paper money from Bolekhov consists of a series of three cardboard notes issued by the Jewish National Council in Bolekhov. These were issued between 1917-1920 the time of national revolutions and Civil War in Russia in provinces that lacked official means of payment. Jewish emergency money was printed by various organizations in municipalities that had high concentrations of Jews in the population. The Jewish National Council in Bolekhov issued notes that are printed in Yiddish. The denominations are 10, 20 and 50 heller. The reverse of the notes have an ink seal with the name of the council in Hebrew and Ukrainian and a Magen David. All notes are exceedingly rare.

When World War II broke out, Bolekhov came under Soviet occupation until July 2, 1941, when the town was occupied by Slovak and Ukrainian units under German command. The Jews were segregated in a ghetto established in the autumn of 1941 and intolerable living conditions were aggravated by the arrival of refugees from the villages in the district. Relief was organized with great difficulty, and by the spring of 1942 most had died of starvation. Some Jews were employed in the local tanneries and in lumber work at a special labor camp.

In October 1941, the German police seized over 1,000 Jews. After being tortured for 24 hours, some succumbed and the rest were brought to a mass grave and shot. The second mass liquidation took place in September 1942 when a manhunt was conducted jointly by the Ukrainian and Jewish police for three days. The victims were herded into the courtyard of the city hall, where some 500 persons were murdered by the Ukrainians and some 2,000 dispatched by freight trains to Belzec death camp where they perished. Most of the remaining Jews, including those from the work camp and some of the Jewish police and Judenrat were killed in December 1942.

By 1943 only 1,000 Jews remained in the ghetto, in the work camp, and a few in the Jewish police. These were gradually murdered and only a few managed to escape to the neighboring forests. Some joined the partisans, while others perished there during the first few weeks. By the time of the Soviet conquest in the spring of 1944, only a handful of Jews remained alive.



Bolekhov 50 Heller circa 1919 printed on white paper 65 X50 mm.

# Pomegranates on Israeli Coins

By: Shmuel Aviezer

The motif of pomegranate has its roots in the annals of Israel as a symbol of blessing and fertility. It is one of the seven choice fruits of the land of Israel as quoted in Deuteronomy 8:8: "and the land of Israel of wheat and barley and vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive and honey."

A hundred ornamented pomegranates embellished the two columns of the entrance of the Temple: "And be made chains, as in the oracle, and put them on the head of pillars, and made an hundred pomegranates, and put them on the chains." (2 Chronicles 3:16-17).

The pomegranates decorated even the attire of the Grand Priest: "and they made upon the hems of the robe pomegranates of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and twined linen: and they made bells of pure gold, and put the bells between the pomegranates upon the hem of the robe, round about between the pomegranates: A bell and a pomegranate, a bell and pomegranate, round about the hem of the robe to minister in; as the Lord commanded Moses:" (Exodus 39:24-26).

In the years 66-70 A.D., at the time of the Jewish war against the Romans, the motif of the pomegranates appeared on many coins issued in Jerusalem. (1) With the revival of the State of Israel in 1948 the first depiction of the motif of the pomegranate was on the 500.- pruta coin, issued in May, 1952. (2) Then, when the IL 1.- banknote was replaced by a coin in September 1967, the same motif, i.e. the branch with three unripe pomegranates, was introduced thereon. (3)

In February 1980, the Israeli currency was reformed introducing the Sheqel as the new denomination. Thereby, the IL 1.- coin was transformed into the 10.- new agorot coin carrying the same motif. (4) In the years 1976-1977, the version of the special coin for the Redemption of the Newborn depicted the same motif five of which were rendered in a round central shape of the obverse. (5)

A different demonstration of the pomegranate motif, that of ripe ones, was uncovered as carved in a frieze at the ancient synagogue at Capernaum near Tiberias on the Sea of Galilee. It was adopted to feature on the 5.- agorot coin of the pound series that circulated in the years 1960-1980. (6)

The latest appearance of ripe pomegranate on Israeli coins was on the "Lion and the Pomegranate" coin in the Holyland Wildlife in 1997. (7)

Now, for two side-lights: The wisest of all, King Solomon, knew how to exploit this fruit in flirtations: "Thy temples are like a piece of

pomegranates with thy locks.” (Song of Solomon 4:3.) In a witty commentary, the worthiness of the pomegranate is supposed to be quite significant because it contains 613 seeds, the equivalent of the number of the religious commandments of “do” (248) and don’t (365). If you don’t believe it, count.



# Israeli Hanukka Coins Series 1958-1990 (5719-5751)

Some background information

By: Shmuel Aviezer

## 1) Torah Or (5719/1958)

In the House of Israel it is accustomed in Hanukka, the Festival of Lights, to endow members of the family, particularly the children, with "Hanukka Gelt". This tradition spurred the idea in the Bank of Israel to inaugurate a low-denomination copper-nickel coin to serve this purpose. This came in the wake of the success that befronted the issue of the first commemorative coin of Israel on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the State. The fixed value of the proposed coin was fixed at I.L. 1.- to be sold to the public at I.L. 2.-

The main theme chosen for the coin was a menorah that first appeared on the coins of Mathathias Antigonus, the last King of the Hasmonean dynasty (40-37 BCE). Underneath were the words in Hebrew "Torah Or" (The Law of Light) quoted from the verse in Proverbs 6 : 23: "For the Commandment is a lamp, and the law is light". The second President of Israel, Mr. Irzak Ben-Zvi, bestowed his approval on the choice of this quotation. The two eight-pointed stars embracing the Menorah were as those appearing on the coins of Alexander Jannaeus (103-76 BCE).

General note: Because the feast of Hanukkah falls around December each year, the Hebrew date, which starts in Rosh-Hashanah (Jewish New Year), around September-October, always marks one year ahead of the calendar year on the Hanukkah coins.

## 2) Degania Kibbutz (5720/1959)

The popular reception of the Torah Or by the public led to the decision to issue a Hanukkah coin regularly each year in the same category. The themes chosen should typify significant anniversary or event in Israel's history or should exhibit an old Hanukkah lamp. This year's coin commemorated the jubilee of the collective settlements of Israel in the Kibbutz of Degania on the shores of Tiberea, the Lake of Galilee. In the original design of the obverse of the coin a background of highlands, that seemed conspicuous, was dimmed in order to alleviate the impression of showing a Syrian territory.

## 3) Henrietta Szold (5721/1960)

This coin was devoted to Henrietta Szold on her 100th birthday, marking up two important spheres in her career: Youth Aliya (immigration) activities and the founding of Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem. The two

motifs shown: The Hadassah Medical Center in Jerusalem on one side and a depiction of a shepherdess holding a new-born lamb on the other – resembling Szold's unflinching efforts to ameliorate the life of the handicapped.

#### **4) Maccabean Hero (5722/1961)**

To choose a theme for this coin, a vigorous debate ensued in the Public Committee that scrutinizes the subjects to be depicted on Bank of Israel coins. In summing up, it was agreed that a historic event that would glorify a victorious deed should serve as the motif for this coin. Consequently, the theme adopted illustrated the battle between the Maccabees and Seleucides in which Elazar, brother of Judah the Maccabee, unleashed a sword into the belly of the elephant that crushed him to death but brought victory to the Maccabees. This scene is inspired by the tale related in the book of First Maccabees, Chapter 1, 42-46: "and he gave up his life in battle..."

#### **Hanukkah lamps of Jewish Communities**

The Public Committee for the design of banknotes, coins and commemorative coins, adjoining the Governor of the Bank of Israel, took a decision that Hanukkah lamps from all parts of the Jewish Diaspora should henceforth adorn the Hanukkah coins.

#### **5) Hanukkah Lamp from Italy (5723/1962)**

A Sicilian Hanukkah lamp, supposedly dating from the 15th century, was chosen for this coin. Yet, after thorough historical probe to assure its origin, the inscription on the coin read: "17th century Italian lamp"

A curious mishap occurred in minting this coin in the Swiss mint. The Hebrew word "Hanukkiya" was inadvertently imprinted "Hanuniya" on the whole quantity. When this mistake was perceived the coins were dispatched back to the mint for immediate modification. The mint, in a frantic effort, re-struck correctly all the coins in a few days, and returned them to the Bank of Israel. The entire quantity of the first strike was eventually melted down except for two specimens retained at the Bank's vaults.

#### **6) Hanukkah Lamp from North Africa (5724/1963)**

Pursuing the decision to display Hanukkah lamps on this coin series, an 18th century lamp from North Africa was chosen from the exhibition in the Bezalel Museum in Jerusalem. This lamp reflects the

interplay between the decorative elements of Southern Europe and Those of Moslem cultures.

In this coin a different mishap occurred. Instead of the eight censers, resembling the eight days of the Festival of Lights, occasionally lighted with wax candles, plus the side-censer, the "Shamash", for the auxiliary candle, ten censers were depicted in one row! This oversight resulted from the artist's final wrong drawing of the sketch on which the dies were produced. Nobody cared to count the censers prior to minting, which was obviously warranted in this case, as the "Shamash" was placed in the same row with the other censers, an unusual rendition. (By the way, the original lamp had the correct nine censers). The error was not discovered until all the coins were distributed to the collectors, for whom, unfortunately for them, this did not turn out to be a collectors' boom!

#### **7) Hanukkah lamp from Russia (5733/1972)**

As may be noticed from the dates on this coin, there was a nine-year interval during which no Hanukkah coin was issued. One particular reason for this absence was, to avoid confounding with a circulation coin, denominated at I.L. 1.-, which had been issued in 1963 to replace the banknote of the same face value, which in shape and metal composition was identical to the prescription of the Hanukkah coins.

But, the then Governor of the Bank of Israel, Mr. Moshe Zanbar, acquiescing to the request by the American-Israel Numismatic Association, decided to resume the issue of Hanukkah coin series, enabling many families to pursue the tradition of giving Hanukkah Gelt to their children and thereby enhancing the relations with Israel and the Jewish tradition, while encouraging youngsters to enjoy the hobby of coin collection.

To dress up a conspicuous attire on the renewed coin issue, while adjusting to the then prevailing costs, the metal composition was changed from copper-nickel to 75% silver and subsequently the denomination was upgraded to I.L. 5.-

For this coin an 18th century lamp from Russia was picked up. It shows two stylized crowned lions supporting a lamp with the Hebrew letters "nun, gimel, bet and shin" marking the traditional motto of Hanukkah in the Diaspora: "A great miracle occurred there." Choosing this lamp at that specific time came to demonstrate fraternal sympathy with the Jew of Russia when the call "Let my People go" resounded widely over.

#### **8) Hanukkah lamp from Babylon (5734/1973)**

This lamp, dating from the 19th century, was chosen from the collection of the Israel Museum. The adoption of this lamp came to honor

the immigration of Jews from Arab countries. Its set-up proves that the lighting was achieved by oil-nurtured chords. The metal composition of this coin was reduced to 50% silver due to increasing metal costs.

**9) Hannukah lamp from Damascus (5735/1974)**

From time to time, the choice of a Hanukkah lamp was influenced by events taking place in the Diaspora. In this case, picking up a lamp from Damascus came as a gesture of un-slackened bonds with Syrian Jews who were in distress at the time of issuing this coin. The denomination of this coin was again upgraded to I.L. 10.-

**10) Hanukkah lamp from Holland (5736/1975)**

An 18th century lamp from Holland featured on this year's coin to salute the positive attitude of the Dutch people towards the people of Israel.

**11) Hanukkah lamp from America (5737/1976)**

This year's coin was dedicated to the festive occasion of the Bicentennial of the United States of America. The portable lamp, displayed at the Jewish Museum in New York, was proposed by Mr. Morris Bram, then Chairman of AINA. It was assumed that Jewish peddlers, while away from home during Hanukkah, used this lamp for lighting. Though this particular lamp seemed a little "naïve", the Committee at the Bank applauded its originality and the drama that it demonstrated.

It is made of aluminum and is collapsible into a small box. To avoid the need to specify an exact date of the lamp the inscription appearing on the coin reads: "Early American Hanukkah Lamp". In abiding by the wish of the graphic artist that drew the sketch, Ms. Ronit Darin, a small tongue of fire was lit on the auxiliary censer, the Shamash, to bestow vitality on the lamp. Surprisingly, the whole quantity of this coin was sold in a short time, and even about 10,000 bids were turned away empty-handed!

**12) Hanukkah lamp from Jerusalem (5738/1977)**

Coinciding with the 10th anniversary of the unification of Jerusalem, this year's Hanukkah coin featured a 20th century lamp from Jerusalem, which was in display at the Museum of Ethnology and Folklore in Haaretz Museum in Tel-Aviv. A name, Rivka Paradis, probably the name of the owner to whom this lamp was dedicated, is etched at a centerline in the lamp.

The minting of this coin by the Government Printer in Jerusalem met with serious technical difficulties, which hindered the flowing supply of

the coins to the subscribers in such a way that the last coins were delivered a few months after Hanukkah! The metal composition of this coin was again changed to 75% copper and 25% nickel to meet rising costs.

### **13) Hanukkah lamp from France (5739/1978)**

A 14th century lamp from France selected from among those in the Israel Museum, featured on the Hanukkah coin of this year. In the design of this lamp, influences of the Gothic art are traced while the twelve gates at the center of the lamp symbolize the twelve tribes of Israel. Continued inflationary fluctuations caused the Bank to fix a higher face value than before, I.L. 25.-

### **14) Hanukkah coin from Egypt (5740/1979)**

With the conclusion of the peace agreement with Egypt, it was only appropriate that this year's Hanukkah coin exhibit a 19th century Hanukkah lamp from Egypt. This was selected from the rich collection of Hanukkah lamps owned by Mr. Isaac Einhorn, an expert in researching Hanukkah lamps from all Jewish lands of Dispersion.

Responding to the request by the Israel Government Coins and Medals Corporation, which is by law the sole distributors of commemorative and special coins issued by the Bank of Israel, the metal composition of this coin was reverted to 50% silver (instead of copper-nickel as in recent coins) resulting in raising the face value to I.L. 100.-. The superb minting at Bern, Switzerland was widely acclaimed. Samples of these coins were presented to the heroes of the 1954 "affair" in Egypt and to other prominent personalities in the Jewish community in Egypt.

### **15) Hanukkah lamp from Corfu (5741/1980)**

In memory of the Jewish community in the Greek island of Corfu, which perished in concentration camps during World War II, this year's coin displayed a 19th century Hanukkah lamp from that island.

The fixing of the denomination of this coin was delayed as the changeover of the Israeli currency from Lira (pound) to Sheqel was being secretly prepared and finally declared in February 1980. Initially the face value was set at 25 sheqalim, but after prolonged negotiations with the IGCNC, the Bank of Israel decided to cut down the long-lived "Gordian Knot" between the denomination and the intrinsic value of the metal composition of the Hanukkah (and commemorative and special) coins and affix a uniform denomination for all the brilliant uncirculated and proof coins irrespective of their metal content. This was basically marked as one sheqel. This came in the knowledge that the price collected by the IGCNC

is dissociated from the level of the denomination. (see my article in the "Shekel", March-April, 1992).

Apart from the severance of the link between the face value and the metal composition, the Corfu coin established as yet another renewal of old Jewish tradition in the realm of coins. The coin weighed 14.40 grams containing 12.24 grams of silver (85%) and thus resurrecting the sheqalim coins struck during the revolt against Rome in 66-70 AD, which had the same particulars.

It is worthwhile to note that the small Jewish community in Corfu suffered persecution along the history but they kept their religious duties and built magnificent synagogues. They were especially proud of growing superb "Ethrogim", the unique citron forming a part of the four species intended for reciting the blessings in Succoth, the Tabernacles Holiday.

#### **16) Hanukkah Lamp from Poland (5742/1981)**

Out of the collection of the Museum of Hechal Shlomo in Jerusalem, a 19th century Hanukkah lamp from Poland was singled out for this coin. Curiously, it figured a swan in the high middle centerpiece. This choice comes as a tribute to the magnificent and long-lived Jewish Community in Poland, which in a thousand years became the largest single Jewish community in Europe until the greater part thereof perished in the Holocaust during World War II.

#### **17) Hanukkah lamp from Yemen (5743/1982)**

Looking for an authentic Hanukkah lamp from Yemen, a 20th century stone-built lamp was found in the Israel Museum in Jerusalem. Its authenticity was certified by the Yemenite Rabbi Kappah. The inscription in Hebrew: "I will go up to the palm tree" (Song of Songs 7-8) commemorating the centenary of the first immigrants of Jews from Yemen to Israel, was imprinted on the coin in characteristic Yemenite calligraphy, which was inspired by handwriting from Sana'a, the capital of Yemen, dated 1469, as appearing in the "Hebrew Book" in the National Library in Jerusalem.

#### **18) Hanukkah lamp from Prague (1744/1983)**

This very interesting Hanukkah lamp was dedicated to the golden age of the Jewish community in Prague in the 16th-18th centuries, when outstanding Jewish personalities marked their prominence in the society. In 1941, Jews of Prague were deported to the death camps and only a few survived. The embellished lamp shows the images of Moses holding the tablets on one side and Aaron with the "Shamash" on the other side.

**19) Hanukkah lamp from Theresinstadt (5745/1984)**

In the basement of Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority in Jerusalem, an unusual Hanukkah lamp was uncovered, which had been found under the remnants of the Theresinstadt Ghetto in Czechoslovakia. It was crafted by assembling scrap metal pieces and thumb-nuts that served as censers for the candles. Its authenticity was verified by the director of the Terezin Museum in Kibbutz Givat Haim/Ehud. Its simple beauty, and the fact that such a Jewish relic was clandestinely produced, echoed the drama of challenging the severe prevailing living conditions in the Ghetto.

This coin issue coincided with the 40th anniversary of the liberation of the Ghetto. Notably, the digits on the denomination side were so shaped to bring to mind the striped garments of the inmates of the Ghetto:

**20) Hanukkah lamp from Ashkenaz (5746/1985)**

The name "Ashkenaz" refers to the Jewish settlements in central Europe in the 16th century. Not much later they were located in secluded areas, the Ghettos. This Hanukkah lamp dates from 1574. On the bronze plate behind the candles the Hannukkah blessing is embossed. It was formerly owned by Eliahu Hen from Amsterdam who perished in the Holocaust. Today it is a part of the Israel Museum's collection in Jerusalem.

**21) Hanukkah lamp from Algeria (5747/1986)**

This 19th century lamp pays tribute to the prominent Jewish community of Algeria, North Africa. The design of the lamp reflects embellished oriental-styled building. The inscription in Hebrew is inspired by North African Hebrew calligraphy.

**22) Hanukkah Lamp from England (5748/1987)**

Pursuing the tradition to commemorate Jewish communities in the Diaspora, an 18th century Hanukkah lamp from England was chosen from the collection of the Jewish Museum in London. It shows the prophet Elijah holding the scroll while two ravens feed him, as told in Kings I 17-4: "and it shall be, that thou shalt drink from the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there."

The Jewish Community in England dates from 1066. Though traversing ups and downs through its long history, it has widely contributed in the building of the Holyland. An echo of their brave attitude could be related to the phrase in Isaiah 42-12: "Let them give glory into the Lord, and declare his praise in the islands." Both sides of the coin, as designed

by Ruth Lubin, featured an encompassing contour line that paralleled the shape of the lamp.

**23) Hanukka lamps from Tunisia (5749/1988)**

The Jewish community in Tunisia is one of the oldest Jewish communities in the Diaspora, dating back to the period of Roman Empire. The relevant lamp selected is from the 19th century and it is lit with oil by linen chords.

**24) Hanukkah Lamp from Persia (5750/1989)**

The lamp chosen for this year dated presumably to the 13th-14th century. To avoid misrepresentation, it was decided that the inscription on the coin should read: "An ancient lamp from Persia". For the first time, the writing of this coin was entrusted to the Spanish mint in Madrid. Difficulties in communication and mismatching between the obverse and the reverse caused delay in delivery. Part of the ordered quantity was subsequently diverted to a substitute mint to evade further delays.

**25) Hanukkah Lamp from Cochin (5751/1990)**

The city of Cochin is situated at the southern tip of the Indian sub-continent. In the beginning of the fifties of the 20th century, 3000 Cochin Jews immigrated to Israel and they go on keeping much of their traditional liturgical songs.

In searching for an appropriate lamp that represents the Cochin old Jewish community, a 19th century lamp was selected from among the six such lamps found in the collection of the renowned Hanukkah lamp collector Mr. Isaac Einhorn. The letters inscribed in Hebrew were inspired by Cochin characters uncovered after a research was conducted in the relevant literature in the National Library of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

This is the last of the Hanukkah coin series issued by the Bank of Israel. The IGCME suggested to the Bank to embark on a new coin series. Following the discussion of the idea in the Public Committee of the Bank, it was decided that the ensuing coin series should be devoted to artistic Jewish Religious Relics.

# Israel Exploration Society

In 1914 a group of Jewish intellectuals in Jerusalem, including Yitzak Ben-Zvi, D. Yellin and others founded the Society for the Reclamation of Antiquities. It was based on the model of the other foreign societies engaged in the exploration of the Holy Land. Its purpose was to further historical, geographical and archaeological research concerning the Land of Israel.

The Society's activities were disrupted by the outbreak of World War I but resumed in 1920 with the assistance of the British Mandatory Government when it underwent a name change to the Palestine Exploration Society. Its first excavations included Absalom's Tomb and a synagogue at Hammath-Tiberias, and in 1925-27 the Third Wall at Jerusalem was partly cleared. In 1929 B. Mazar (Maisler) became secretary of the Society and, under its auspices, excavated at Ramat Rahel (1931) and began uncovering the necropolis of Bet She'arim (1936).

With the establishment of the State of Israel the activities of the Society expanded enormously, parallel with the growth of interest in archaeology. Its name was again changed to The Israel Exploration Society and it continues to play a key role in archaeological studies. It continued the excavations at Beth She'arim and conducted other ones at Tell Qasile, Hazor, Masada, the Judean Desert caves, En Gedi, Arad, the Temple Mount, Jewish Quarter and City of David in Jerusalem, Herodion, Aphek, Lachish, Dor, Zippori, and other sites. It is presently co-sponsoring the renewed excavations at Tel Hazor.

Besides the excavation reports of these and other sites, the Society publishes a Hebrew-English series *Eretz-Israel: Archaeological, Historical and Geographical Studies*. It coordinates much of the multi-institutional archaeological research carried out in Israel as a non-profit organization governed by an Executive Committee and a Council. This involves organizing excavations, enlisting financial support for archaeological projects, publishing results of projects, and acting as liaison in cooperation with other institutions in the field of publication in a collective effort to promote the cause of archaeology.

Another facet of the Society's activities is the dissemination of knowledge gained from the exploration of Israel. Fifty conferences have been held for the members of the Society. These annual gatherings include lectures by archaeologists and guided tours of newly discovered sites. Hebrew-speaking members receive the quarterly *Qadmoniot*, while the quarterly *Israel Exploration Journal* caters to the English reader.

In 1989, the Israel Exploration Society was awarded the prestigious Israel Prize for its unique contribution to society and to the State of Israel. The citation of the judges' committee notes: "It has been the principal and most effective institution for furthering knowledge of the archaeology and history of the country, both at home and abroad, since it was founded 75 years ago."

The illustrated medal was issued in 1984 in celebration of the societies 70<sup>th</sup> annual conference. The obverse has the inscription "Truth will spring out of the earth." The inscription is surrounded by ancient pottery, earthen jars with scrolls, coins and a pick, the tool of excavators. The reverse side has the inscription The Israel Exploration Society and a candelabra.



# AMEDEO MODIGLIANI

Amedeo Modigliani was born in Livorno, Tuscany, Italy in 1884 and was the fourth child of the Jewish family of Flaminio Modigliani and his French-born wife, Eugénie Garsin. He was raised in poverty after his father's money-changing business went bankrupt. Amedeo was also beset by health problems after an attack of typhoid at the age of 14 followed by tuberculosis two years later.

In 1902, Amedeo Modigliani enrolled in the Scuola libera di Nudo (Free School of Nude Studies) in Florence and a year later moved to Venice where he registered to study at the Istituto per le Belle Arti di Venezia. It is in Venice that he first tried hashish and, rather than studying, began to spend time frequenting the sleazy parts of the city.

In 1906 he moved to Paris, the then focal point of the avant-garde, where he would become the epitome of the tragic artist, creating a posthumous legend almost as famous as that of Vincent Van Gogh. Despite his many love affairs, his excesses of drunkenness, and frequent lapses into illness, aggravated by poverty, he managed to produce, within his relatively short career, a substantial body of work. More than 20 of his sculptures, some 500 paintings, and thousands of watercolors and drawings have survived.

Modigliani usually painted single figures with backgrounds only vaguely defined. There are portraits of his fellow artists and of the two women who played leading roles in his life, the English poet Beatrice Hastings with whom he lived from 1914 to 1916 and later his wife Jeanne Hébuterne. Jeanne came from a conservative bourgeois background and was renounced by her family, devout Roman Catholics, for her liaison with the painter, who in their eyes was nothing but a debauched derelict, and Jewish besides. Despite her family, soon they were living together and although Jeanne was the love of his life, their public scenes became even more famous than Modigliani's personal drunken exhibitions.

Modigliani's subjects included the streetwalkers of the Left Bank whom he never made pretty but who always evoke pity. His portraits look as if he had caught the sitter in a moment of utter fatigue, lonely and devoid of glamour or gaiety. Their energy has been drained and their hands dangle limply on their laps. Their heads are inclined and their eyes look listlessly and unseeing, as though staring from another world. Modigliani was a superb draftsman and his color sense was fascinating. His sensuous nudes are painted in broad planes of vivid ochre, orange, and earthy hues, surrounded by strong lines. His iridescent tones are achieved by covering thin layers of color with many coats of varnish. In 1917 his

only one-man show was a complete fiasco. The police ordered the five canvases of nudes to be removed and this led to a scandal.

During his lifetime he sold a number of his works, but never for any great amount of money. What funds he did receive, soon vanished for drugs and alcohol. In May of 1919 he returned to Paris, where, with Jeanne and their daughter, he rented an apartment in the rue de la Grande Chaumière. While there, both Jeanne and Modigliani painted portraits of each other and of themselves.

Modigliani died in 1920. There was an enormous funeral, attended by all of the artistic community from Montmartre and Montparnasse. Jeanne Hébuterne, who had been taken to her parents' home, threw herself out of a fifth-floor window two days after Modigliani's death, killing herself and her unborn child. Modigliani was interred in Pere Lachaise Cemetery. Jeanne Hébuterne was buried at the Cimetiere de Bagneux, near Paris and it was not until 1930 that her embittered family allowed her to be moved to rest beside Modigliani. Their orphaned 15-month-old daughter Jeanne was adopted by Modigliani's sister in Florence. As an adult, she would write an important biography of her father titled: Modigliani: Man and Myth.

Today, Amedeo Modigliani is regarded as one of the greatest artists of the 20th century whose works are on display in the great museums of the world. His sculptures rarely change hands and the few paintings that change hands can sell for more than US \$15.6 million. His "Nu couché" (Sur le côté gauche) sold in November of 2003 for US\$26,887,500.

In 1996 the Israel Government Coins & Medals Corp. issued an art medal commemorating Modigliani which had a color lithograph for the obverse. The editor does not know who issued the Modigliani portrait medal which has "Livorno 1884-1920 Paris" in the inscription.



# THE CONSISTOIRE ISRAELITE

The Consistoire Israelite is the official organization of the Jewish congregations in France established in 1808. The term was borrowed from Protestant usage by the Napoleonic administration to designate the committees of rabbis and laymen responsible for the administration of the Jewish congregations at the regional and national levels.

The French Revolution abolished the existing internal structure of the Jewish communities. The adherence of a Jew to his communal organization then became voluntary, and created problems for the Jewish leadership, mainly concerning communal budget. In consequence, the reforms introduced by Napoleon I were welcomed by some of the Jewish leaders in the hope that they would confer on Judaism a legal status. The emperor himself was anxious to have an instrument at his disposal through which he could effectively supervise the Jewish community and at the same time integrate the Jews as individuals within French society.

The statute establishing a Jewish religious organization was drafted at the Assembly of Jewish Notables by the commissioners appointed by Napoleon in conjunction with the nine Jewish delegates. It was finally ratified by the Assembly on Dec. 9 and 10, 1806, although not without some opposition, and promulgated by imperial decree on March 17, 1808. The decree provided that a central consistory was to be set up in Paris to head a group of regional consistories, which in their turn would control the local communities. A subsequent decree was issued establishing the location and jurisdiction of 13 regional consistories, to include also the Rhineland and northern Italy, then part of the French Empire.

The central consistory comprised three grands-rabbins and two laymen, appointed by co-option, and the regional consistories one grand rabbin and three laymen. They were elected by 25 "notables" of the area who were designated by the members and confirmed in office by the local prefects. All nominations were subject to the approval of the government.

Each head of a Jewish family was obliged to pay dues to the consistories. The budget was intended to cover the expenses of the Jewish religion in the narrow sense, i.e., the salaries of the rabbis and the maintenance of synagogues. Welfare and educational activities were not included in the regular budget. The function of the consistories was "to ensure that no assembly for prayers should be formed without express authorization. It was to encourage the Jews in the exercise of useful professions and refer to the authorities those who do not have an

acknowledged means of livelihood, and to inform the authorities each year of the number of Jewish conscripts in the area." All those who wished to remain Jews had to register with the consistory.

The duty of the rabbis was "to teach religions and the doctrines included in the decisions of the Great Sanhedrin, to call for ... obedience to the laws, especially... those related to the defense of the fatherland... and in particular, every year, at the time of conscription, to induce the Jews to consider their military service as a sacred duty" in the performance of which they were exempted from any religious observances with which it could not be reconciled. The Jewish leaders generally accepted these regulations, which restored authority to the Jewish communities and also gave them a centralized organization on the national scale.

After the fall of Napoleon the communities of Belgium, Luxembourg, and Westphalia retained the consistorial system. New consistories were created in Saint-Esprit (Bayonne) in 1846 and in Lyons in 1857. The central consistory of Algiers and the regional consistories of Oran and Constantine were founded in 1845. They were linked to the metropolitan organization as three consistories of equal status in 1867. In 1872, after the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine to Germany and the consequent influx of Alsatian refugees, new consistories were founded in Lille and Vesoul.

Serious financial difficulties had endangered the existence of the consistories from the outset. As many of the members failed to pay their dues, in 1816 it was agreed that the state treasury would assume their collection in return for a percentage of the income. In 1831 King Louis-Philippe agreed to include the expenses of the Jewish religion, in particular the salaries of the rabbis and religious officials, in the national budget. An order of 1844 introduced important organizational changes. The central consistory was to be composed of a grand rabbin (the chief rabbi of France) and a representative of each of the regional consistories, while the regional consistories were to consist of a grand rabbin and five laymen. The right of veto in religious matters was granted to the rabbis.

In France the consistory remained the official French Jewish representative organization until the separation of church and state in 1905. Afterward, it was voluntarily retained, a new name, the Union des Associations Culturelles de France et d'Algerie, was given, to which the term "Consistory" is still applied. The three departments of Alsace-Lorraine, which retained their French institutions at the time of the German annexation in 1871 and did not renounce them either in 1918 or in 1944-45, still have a consistory despite the law of separation.

Following the trend set by Napoleon and embodied in the motto of the Central Consistory "Religion and the Fatherland," a number of

consistorial leaders endeavored to promote Jewish assimilation and preserve only the religious differences, which also became blurred with time. Others, notably in Alsace-Lorraine, used the consistorial organization as a force for maintaining cohesion and tradition within Jewish society.

After the German occupation of Paris in 1940 the central consistory was active in the free zone of France, continuously protesting against the anti-Jewish restrictions. However, its financial resources were soon depleted, since it could no longer rely upon the support of the wealthier Jews. Despite these odds, the central consistory aided various underground bodies of both native- and foreign-born Jews. By 1965 practically the entire Algerian Jewish community had settled in France, yet the central consistory still retained the former name which included both France and Algeria. The consistories in Algeria still nominally exist, with their task restricted to the custody of remaining Jewish property.

The illustrated bearer bond was issued by the Consistoire Israélite in 1862 for the construction of two synagogues. One was to be located on the Rue de la Victoria and the other near Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris. To raise funds for this purpose it was decided to issue bonds to the amount of 2,000,000 francs. The issue consisted of 6667 shares at 300 francs each. The annual interest was 15 francs paid semi-annually. The shares were to be redeemed in drawings over 75 years at 500 francs each.



# Jewish History in a Capsule

By Joseph McCain  
Senator John McCain's Brother

There is a lot of worry popping up in the media just now -- "Can Israel Survive?" Don't worry about it. It relates to something that Palestinians, the Arabs, and perhaps most Americans don't realize -- the Jews are never going quietly again. Never. And if the world doesn't come to understand that, then millions of Arabs are going to die. It's as simple as that.

Throughout the history of the world, the most abused, kicked-around race of people have been the Jews. Not just during the holocaust of World War II, but for thousands of years. They have truly been "The Chosen People" in a terrible and tragic sense. The Bible story of Egypt's enslavement of the Jews is not just a story; it is history, if festooned with theological legend and heroic epics

In 70 A. D. the Romans, who had for a long time tolerated the Jews - even admired them as "superior" to other vassals -- tired of their truculent demands for independence and decided on an early "solution" to the Jewish problem. Jerusalem was sacked and reduced to near rubble; Jewish resistance was pursued and crushed by the implacable Roman War Machine -- see "Masada."

And thus began The Diaspora, the dispersal of Jews throughout the rest of the world. Their homeland destroyed, their culture crushed, they looked desperately for the few niches in a hostile world where they could be safe. That safety was fragile, and often subject to the whims of moody hosts. The words "pogrom," "ghetto," and "anti-Semitism" come from this treatment of the first monotheistic people.

Throughout Europe, changing times meant sometimes tolerance, sometimes even warmth for the Jews, but eventually it meant hostility, then malevolence. There is not a country in Europe or Western Asia that at one time or another has not decided to lash out against the children of Moses, sometimes by whim, sometimes by manipulation.

Winston Churchill calls Edward I one of England's very greatest kings. It was under his rule in the late 1200s that Wales and Cornwall were hammered into the British crown, and Scotland and Ireland were invaded and occupied. He was also the first European monarch to set up a really effective administrative bureaucracy, surveyed and censured his kingdom, and established laws and political divisions. But he also embraced the Jews. Actually Edward didn't embrace Jews so much as he embraced their

money. For the English Jews had acquired wealth -- understandable, because this people that could not own land or office, could not join most of the trades and professions, soon found out that money was a very good thing to accumulate. Much harder to take away than land or a store, was a hidden sock of gold and silver coins.

Ever resourceful, Edward found a way -- he borrowed money from the Jews to finance imperial ambitions in Europe, especially France. The loans were almost certainly not made gladly, but how do you refuse your King? Especially when he is "Edward the Hammer." Then, rather than pay back the debt, Edward simply expelled the Jews. Edward was especially inventive -- he did this twice. After a time, he invited the Jews back to their English homeland, borrowed more money, then expelled them again.

Most people do not know that Spain was one of the early entrants into The Renaissance. People from all over the world came to Spain in the late medieval period. All were welcome -- Arabs, Jews, other Europeans. The University of Salamanca was one of the great centers of learning in the world --scholars of all nations, all fields came to Salamanca to share their knowledge and their ideas. But in 1492, Ferdinand and Isabella, having driven the last of Moors from the Spanish Shield, were persuaded by the righteous fundamentalists to announce "The Act of Purification." A series of steps were taken in which all Jews and Arabs and other non-Christians were expelled from the country, or would face the tools and the torches of The Inquisition.

From this "cleansing" come the Sephardic Jews -- as opposed to the Ashkenazim of Eastern Europe. In Eastern Europe, the sporadic violence and brutality against Jews are common knowledge. "Fiddler" without the music and the folksy humor. At times of fury, no accommodation by the Jew was good enough, no profile low enough, no village poor enough or distant enough.

From these come the near-steady flow of Jews to the United States. And despite the disdain of the Jews by most "American" Americans, they came to grab the American Dream with both hands, and contributed everything from new ideas of enterprise in retail and entertainment to becoming some of our finest physicians and lawyers. The modern United States, in spite of itself, is The United States in part because of its Jewish blood.

Then the Nazi Holocaust -- the corralling, sorting, orderly eradication of millions of the people of Moses. Not something that other realms in other times didn't try to do, by the way -- the Germans were just more organized and had better murder technology. I stood in the center of

Dachau for an entire day, about 15 years ago, trying to comprehend how this could have happened. I had gone there on a side trip from Munich, vaguely curious about this Dachau. I soon became engulfed in the enormity of what had occurred there nestled in this middle and working-class neighborhood. How could human beings do this to other human beings, hear their cries, their pleas, their terror, their pain, and continue without apparently even wincing? I no longer wonder.

At some times, some places, any sect of the human race is capable of horrors against their fellow man, whether a member of the Waffen SS, a Serbian sniper, a Turkish policeman in 1920s Armenia, a Mississippi Klansman. Because even in the United States it was not all a Rose Garden. For a long time Jews had quotas in our universities and graduate schools. Only so many Jews could be in a medical or law school at one time. Jews were disparaged widely. I remember as a kid Jewish jokes told without a wince -- "Why do Jews have such big noses?"

Well, now the Jews have a homeland again. A place that is theirs. And that's the point. It doesn't matter how many times the United States and European powers try to rein in Israel: If it comes down to survival of its nation, its people, they will fight like no lioness has ever fought to save her cubs. They will fight with a ferocity, a determination, and a skill that will astound us. And many will die -- mostly their attackers, I believe. If there were a macabre historical betting parlor, my money would be on the Israelis to be standing at the end.

As we killed the kamikazes and the Wehrmacht soldaten of World War II, so will the Israelis kill their suicidal attackers, until there are not enough to torment them. The irony goes unnoticed: While we are hammering away to punish those who brought the horrors of last September here, we restrain the Israelis from the same retaliation

Not the same thing, of course. While we mourn and seethe at September 11th, we don't notice that Israel has a September 11th sometimes every day. We may not notice, but it doesn't make any difference. And it doesn't make any difference whether you are pro-Israeli or you think Israel is the bully of the Middle East. If it comes to where a new holocaust looms -- with or without the concurrence of the United States and Europe, Israel will lash out without pause or restraint at those who would try to annihilate their country.



Am Yisrael Chai  
The People of Israel  
Live On

# Jewish History in Tasmania

Tasmania is the name of a small island south of Australia and was originally called Van Diemens Land. It was discovered in 1642 by the Dutch navigator Tasman who named the territory after his patron, Van Diemen. In 1803 England established a penal colony on the island where they could send convicts and persons convicted of petty crimes.

There has been a Jewish presence in Australia since the very beginning of white settlement. Eight of the 751 convicts on the First Fleet were certainly Jews and a further six may well have been. Among this batch of pioneers were Esther Abrahams, eventually to reign as unofficial 'first lady' of the colony as mistress and wife of Lieutenant George Johnston. John Harris, ultimately the colony's first policeman; and Joseph Levy are among Jewish names that appear in Tasmania's early history.

In 1808 a census showed that there were only 3240 people on the island, including officials, military and convicts, and whatever measure of prosperity was enjoyed by the free inhabitants arose from the expenditure by the imperial government upon the convict settlement. In the year 1820 settlers began to arrive. To every free immigrant was given a tract of land in proportion to the amount of capital brought by him to the colony. The possession of 500 Shillings entitling the holder to 640 acres, and so in proportion, a very liberal view being taken as to what constituted capital.

To every free settler was assigned, if desired, the services of a number of convicts proportionate to the size of his holding. These were fed and clothed by the settler in return for their labor, and the government was relieved of the expense of their support and supervision.

Alongside convicts and emancipists, Jewish free settlers – also largely drawn from Britain's 'urban poor' – elected to seek a "brighter future" By the 1840s there were small but growing Jewish communities in Tasmania.

In 1847 it was arranged that all Jews in Hobart and Launceston prisons should have the privilege of attending synagogue and refraining from work on the Sabbath. Pass holders were permitted to be counted in a minyan, but they could not have honors bestowed on them.

Handfuls of committed Jewish pioneers, most of them small businessmen, some former convicts, established the foundations of congregational life and consecrated cemeteries and places of worship in what are now the chief urban centers. The first organized services in Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania) were convened at the Argyle Street, Hobart home of wealthy emancipist Judah Solomon in 1830. A 'house of worship'

– now the oldest synagogue in the country – was constructed, on land donated by Solomon, in 1845.

With the arrival of Orthodox newcomers from England, and spurred on by the need to distribute charity, the community consecrated its first synagogue in Hobart on July 4, 1843. In March 1864 the Hebrew Proprietary School was permanently incorporated with the synagogue. The first bet din in the city dates from 1911. The Hobart synagogue is the oldest standing synagogue within the British Commonwealth outside of England. The Tasmanian Hebrew Benevolent Society was formed in 1847.

Several merchant tokens from Tasmania were issued by Jewish merchants. Lewis Abrahams was a draper (tailor) in Hobart Town. His tokens were issued in 1855 and feature a Kangaroo and an Ostrich on one side with his advertisement on the reverse.



Although Jewish community numbers were augmented substantially by the gold rush, the proportion of Jews within the general population has remained fairly constant at 0.5 per cent ever since. In general terms, the 150 years from the start of colonization were marked by the dominance of Anglo-Jewish elites. The community and sub-communities in each colony or state were led, controlled and dictated to by English-speaking Jews, fiercely loyal to the 'mother country' and dedicated to being and perpetuating themselves as patriotic Anglo-Australians 'of the Jewish faith'.

# MOSES MAIMONIDES

## 800TH Anniversary of Death

The most illustrious figure in Judaism in the post-talmudic era, and one of the greatest of all time, Maimonides was born in Cordoba, Spain in 1135 to his father Maimon, dayyan of Cordoba and himself a renowned scholar. As a result of the fall of Cordoba to the Almohads in May or June, 1148, when Moses had just reached his 13th birthday, and the consequent religious persecution which began, Maimon was obliged to leave Cordoba with his family and all trace of them is lost for the next eight or nine years, which they spent wandering from place to place in Spain (and possibly Provence) until in 1160 they settled in Fez, Morocco. From there, they moved on to the Land of Israel and later, to Egypt.

During the first years of his residence in Egypt Maimonides experienced many misfortunes. He suffered a crushing blow when his brother David drowned in the Indian Ocean while on a business trip, leaving a wife and two children, and with him were lost not only the family fortune but moneys belonging to others. Maimonides took the blow badly. For a full year he lay almost prostrate, and then he had to seek a means of livelihood.

Compelled now to work for a living, and considering it a sin to earn his livelihood from religion, he adopted the medical profession. After several years of practice Maimonides' authority in medical matters was firmly established. Fame in his calling did not come to him at once. It was only after 1185 when he was appointed one of the physicians to al-Fadil, who had been appointed vizier by Saladin and was virtual ruler of Egypt after Saladin's departure from that country in 1174, that his fame began to spread. He was recommended to the royal family who bestowed upon him many distinctions.

Maimonides classified medicine into three divisions: preventive medicine; healing of the sick; and care of the convalescent, including invalids and the aged. His medical teachings, based on the then prevailing humoral pathology as taught by Hippocrates and Galen, are of a strictly rational character. He disapproved strongly of the use of charms, incantations, and amulets in treating the sick, and was outspoken against any blind belief in authority. He encouraged his disciples to observe and reason critically and insisted on experiment and research.

Maimonides' powerful genius and indefatigable industry enabled him, amid his numerous occupations, to produce monumental works, answer hundreds of questions on various subjects addressed to him from various

parts of the world, and administer the affairs of the community of Cairo, in which, soon after his arrival, he took a leading part, apparently becoming its recognized official head by 1177.

Moses Maimonides, Rabenu Moses Ben Maimon is also known as the "Rambam", and is recognized as the greatest Jewish scholar from Talmudic times until today. Maimonides was one of the leading thinkers in all realms of Judaism and one of the greatest philosophers of the Middle Age. He was also a scientist and researcher. The "Mishneh Torah", a clear, systematic code of Jewish Law, compiled by Maimonides is a monumental work in Judaism. His "Guide to the Perplexed" is a major philosophical work in Jewish Law.

Maimonides' teacher was his father, Rabbi Maimon Hadayan. In spite of his migrations and numerous occupations, Maimonides wrote many important works, among them, interpretations on the Mishneh (the Oral Law) and Talmud, philosophic works, on medicine and responsa. He was known as the "Great Eagle" which aptly described his ability to "spread his wings" over the whole of Jewish Law, people and Land. The expression "From Moses to Moses, none arose as Moses" also symbolizes the immense life-work of Maimonides, both written and oral.

After his burial in Tiberias in 1204, there was heavy mourning throughout the Diaspora. The impact of the "Rambam", today, 800 years after his death, is still significant throughout the Jewish World. His public leadership and personal conduct were exemplary for all and enriched the spirituality of Jewish homes all over the world.

The Israel Government Coins and Medals Corporation have issued a medal commemorating the 800<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Maimonides death. On the obverse Maimonides is depicted as the "Great Eagle" with his wings spread out over the world.



# **JEWISH HISTORY IN HARBIN**

In the 19th century, Harbin was not a city, but only the general reference to a cluster of small villages on the banks of the Songhua River in northern Manchuria, northeast China. Harbin's development began with the start of the Russian invasion of Manchuria towards the end the 19th century. The Russo-Manchurian treaty of 1897, granted Russia the concession to build the Chinese Eastern railway and Harbin then became its administrative center with a 25 mile wide zone along the railway. The chief engineer of the building board of the Chinese Eastern railway was Alexander Yugovich, a civil engineer and specialist in constructing of railways in deserts and highlands, born into a Jewish family that converted to Christianity. The Chinese Eastern railway was to cross Manchuria, Harbin, Pogradichny, and Changchun with Port Arthur in Korea as its final destination. The construction of the line began in August 1897 and opened for traffic in November 1903.

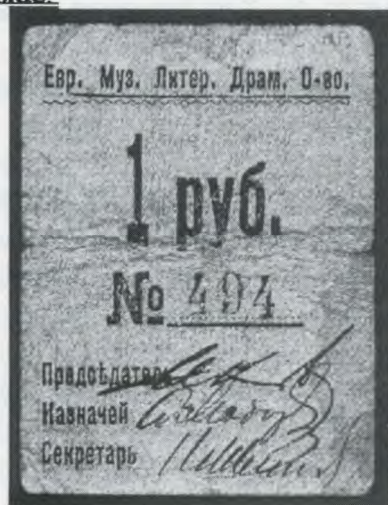
In the same year, several Russian Jewish families moved to Harbin. They had the approval of the Czarist government that was interested in developing the area as rapidly as possible. The Jews who settled in Harbin were granted better status than were the Jews in Russia. The Jews, along with other minority groups, were granted plots of land on the outskirts of the town. With the development of the area, however, they were able to establish businesses as shopkeepers and contractors. By 1903, a self-administrated community of about 500 Jews existed in Harbin.

After the Russo-Japanese war of 1905, many demobilized Jewish soldiers settled in Harbin. They were followed by refugees from the 1905-07 pogroms in southern-western Russian regions. By 1908, there were about 8,000 Jews in the city. The growing Jewish population decided to build a new synagogue, which was called the "Main Synagogue". The first Jewish cemetery in China was opened in Harbin in 1903, which later had more than 2,000 tombs. Several institutions came into being within the community, including clubs, a home for the aged, and a hospital, which provided care for Jews as well as the general population. A *heder* (religious elementary school) was established in Harbin in 1907 and a Jewish secondary school (*Evreiskaya Gimnaziya*) in 1909, which had over 100 pupils by 1910. Seventy percent of the Jewish pupils, however, attended non-Jewish schools since there were not enough classes for in the Jewish schools in Harbin.

In November 1914, following the outbreak of the World War I, the Jewish community of Harbin joined EKOPO (Jewish Committee for the Help of War Victims). This voluntary organization was active during the war years and disbanded in 1920 under the demand of the Bolsheviks. The Jewish community was sharply increased by the influx of Jewish refugees during World War I, the Russian revolution (1917), and Russian Civil war. It reached its peak, 10,000 – 15,000, in the early 1930's, but declined to about 5,000 in 1939. Several Jewish organizations were established in Harbin. Among these was a Jewish secondary school (1919-1924), *Talmud Torah* (later Jewish national school 1920-1950), a hospital *Mishmeret Holim* (1920-1934), a hostel for aged people *Moshav Zkenim* (1920-1943), a school for professional education for women (1922 – 1940), a Jewish library as well as the "New Synagogue".

A Jewish National bank was created in 1923. The bank's prime customers were Jewish businesses in need of cheap credit, but later it also catered to the needs of the wider business community. The bank ceased operation in 1950. The city's first branch of modern hotels, banks, shops, cafes, newspapers, and publishing houses were initiated by members of the Jewish community and helped boost the city's business. Practically all enterprises in Harbin at that time, whether bakeries or coalmines or mills, were closely connected with Jewish economic activity, in addition in 1926 there were 28 companies owned by Jews.

There are several issues of Jewish paper money that can be attributed to Harbin. The Jewish Musical Literary Dramatic Society issued a series of notes in 1919. Printed in Russian, in values from 50 kopecks to 10 rubles, the serial recorded notes have an ink stamp in Yiddish on the back side.



The Harbin Jewish Community Bakery issued notes is 1920 printed in Russian with a Yiddish ink stamp on the back. These are the only notes issued by the Jewish community denominated in Japanese currency. Denominations are 5 and 10 Sen. Both sets of Harbin Jewish notes are exceedingly rare.



The introduction of the New Economic Policy (NEP) in the Soviet Union, in 1925, stimulated another wave of Jewish emigration, some crossing the borders illegally while others received assistance from the Jewish community in order to pay the large amounts of money in foreign currency required by the Soviet government for issuing visas. When Zionism was outlawed in the Soviet Union, Harbin became an island of Russian-language Zionism. In the years from 1924 to 1931, the Soviet regime, largely preoccupied with internal problems, exercised limited influence on Manchurian territory. In 1931, the Japanese army occupied Harbin and the Manchurian territory.

Under the Russian rule, the Jews of Harbin enjoyed the same rights as all other foreigners, and were left alone to develop in their own way. However, in 1928, when the Chinese Eastern Railway was handed over to Chinese, an economic crisis broke out and many Jews left Harbin. Some went to the Soviet Union, others to Shanghai, Tien-Tsin and other cities in China. This situation changed drastically for the worse with the Japanese occupation of Manchuria (1931-45) and the establishment of a puppet regime, under which Jews were subjected to terror and extortion.

Most Jews of Harbin emigrated to the West in the years after World War II. During 1951-1953, about 3,500 of the former "Chinese" Jews, most of them from Harbin, settled in Israel where they established a society of Chinese Jews.

# KIBBUTZ EIN SHEMER

The first members of Ein-Shemer were previously members of a group called Ein-Ganim, which was situated in Petach-Tikva near Tel-Aviv. This is one of the sources of the word "Ein" in the name. Another source is from the water which was found at a later stage (in 1935) at Ein-Shemer. Fountain is maayan in Hebrew, a word with the same root as "Ein".

The name "Shemer" has many sources: 1) Shemer, King of Shomron in the Bible. 2) The Shomron Hills, at the foot of which Ein-Shemer is located. ("Shemer" and "Shomron" contain the same Hebrew root.) 3) The root of "Shemer" is also in "Shomria", the name of one of the first groups whose members formed Ein-Shemer, and in HaShomer. The same root is also in HaShoma- HaTsair - the Young Guard - the youth movement which settled Ein-Shemer.

In 1913 a few of the members of HaShomer, an organization of young people which was founded in 1908 and whose goal was to guard the Jewish settlement in the areas of the Shomron, Judah and the Galilee, decided to establish a guard post at the western entrance to Wadi Ara, which would later come to be used also as a way-station between Judah, the Jesreel Valley and the Galilee. They sought a place one day's ride from Judah and from the Valley, and thus settled close to Karkur, a small, wretched, community of Arab huts on the historic route from the coastal plain to the Jesreel Valley. The harsh conditions, malaria, lack of water (until 1935 water was brought in barrels by wagon from Karkur), a distance away from any other settlement, were the afflictions of the settlers. Until 1927, the year in which the members of HaShomer Hatzair joined the site, groups frequently came and left.

In 1917, ten members of a group called Achdut (unity or togetherness) settled on the spot. They lived in two shacks and a stable, and worked 125 acres of land, using 20 work and guard animals. In 1921, following World War I and the takeover of the Land of Israel by the British, a one-acre enclosed courtyard was built by a group of builders from Rosh-HaAin, members of the Labor Corps. The courtyard was surrounded by a six-foot high stone wall with small openings for guns and large iron gate. A two-story stone house, which was large enough to contain the population of the spot in time of danger, was built. The Labor Corps members did not find the strength to stay there, and the place was deserted for the second time.

In 1927 the first pioneers from the Young Guard from Poland moved to the spot. They were members of Kibbutz Ein-Ganim who had temporarily

settled near Petach-Tikva, awaiting an opportunity to settle the land. The year 1927 can thus be considered the date of the settlement of Ein-Shemer.

In the 1930's the initial group was joined by the Shomria group, and the two groups of youths comprised the original founders of the kibbutz. Life was unbearably and indescribably difficult and at one time or another 80 of the 100 members came down with malaria. In 1934 electricity was installed in the kibbutz, and a year later after much searching and digging a large supply of water was found within the grounds of the kibbutz. This led to a revolution in the development of the farmstead and to the erection of a water tower. In 1938 two guards of Ein-Shemer were murdered by marauding Arabs from the West. During World War II a large British Army base was set up right near the kibbutz.

Kibbutz Ein-Shemer has grown and developed, and today numbers close to 400 members, with a total population (including children, youths, soldiers and a few residents of 700, and a large and developed farmstead.

As in most all kibbutzim, every necessity is supplied to its members by the use of chits in some cases, or by the use of cash from the treasury in other cases. The chits are sometimes indicated for items such as soap, haircuts, toothpaste, postage, movies, concerts and drama tickets etc. In other cases the chits are issued in general form and can be used to purchase anything.

The illustrated chits from Ein Shemer are denominated in 1,5,10 and 50 mils. The rubber stamp specifies their use in the kibbutz supermarket.



# CLUB BULLETIN

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Volume XXV No. 4 July-August 2004

**INS/ICC of LOS ANGELES:** David Gursky took the floor as exhibitor/speaker at the April meeting displaying and telling about his newest acquisitions from the IGCMC, everything from coins, medals, paper money, tokens and even a medal that you could see through. Those in attendance related about some of their own recent items. This group meets the third Thursday of the month beginning at 7pm at Factors Famous Deli. Those coming early can enjoy a meal together.

**INS of NEW YORK:** The study topics for the April meeting were the letter "Q", the topic was Maritime, calendar items were Passover, Yom Hashoa and Israel Independence Day. For the May meeting, the study topics were the letter "R", law was the topic, calendar items were Mother's Day, Yom Yerushalayim, Shavuot and Memorial Day, and always recent acquisitions are encouraged to be shown and discussed.

=====  
It is important that you attend and participate at  
your local INS club meetings each and every month.  
=====

**DID YOU KNOW** that the versatile olive and olive tree live thousands of years? Raising & selling olives is a very popular industry in Israel. Olives contain about half oil which in Biblical days was used to anoint kings, prepare sacrifices and light the Temple menorah. Olive trees live thousands of years and when you visit Israel, you might see the same trees that bore fruit in Judah Maccabee's time. Marine archeologists off the shore of Haifa found the world's oldest preserved olives in an ancient container holding several thousand olives and, according to researchers, was over 7,000 years old.

**COMMENTS FROM DJS:** I had a great vacation and hope the same for all of you. Be well, be happy. . . . *[Signature]*

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# "WINDSURFING" COMMEMORATIVE COIN

## ISSUED BY THE BANK OF ISRAEL

Israel proudly joins other countries that are issuing a Commemorative Coin in honor of the upcoming Olympic Games. The theme of Israel's Coin is the Olympic Sport of **Windsurfing**, the sport in which Israel excels.

Two Israeli athletes have won world championships in **Windsurfing**: **Gal Friedman** won the bronze medal in the Atlanta 1996 Olympic Games, the gold medal in the 2002 World Championship in Thailand, and the silver medal in the 2002 European Championship. In the 2003 World Mistral Championship in Cadiz, Spain, Gal Friedman won the bronze medal in the men's competition and **Lee Korsitz**, the gold medal for the Women's Championship. In doing so, Lee not only qualified for the 2004 Olympic Games, but also became, at only 19 years of age, the youngest woman ever to win a Mistral Windsurfing Championship.



This coin has been authorized by the **Israeli Olympic Committee** and part of the sales proceeds will go to the Committee to help towards the cost of training the Israeli Olympic Delegation.

### Coin Specifications

Cat. No.	Metal and Finish	Face Mint Mark	Diameter	Weight	Maximum Mintage
31601300	Gold/917 22k, Proof	NIS 10 "מ" (Mem)	30mm	16.96g	800
21601380	Silver/925 Proof	NIS 2 "מ" (Mem)	38.7mm	28.8g	3,000
21601300	Silver/925 Proof-like	NIS 1 Star David	30mm	14.4g	3,000
71601331	Set of the 3 above coins				
71601222	Set of the 2 silver coins				

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